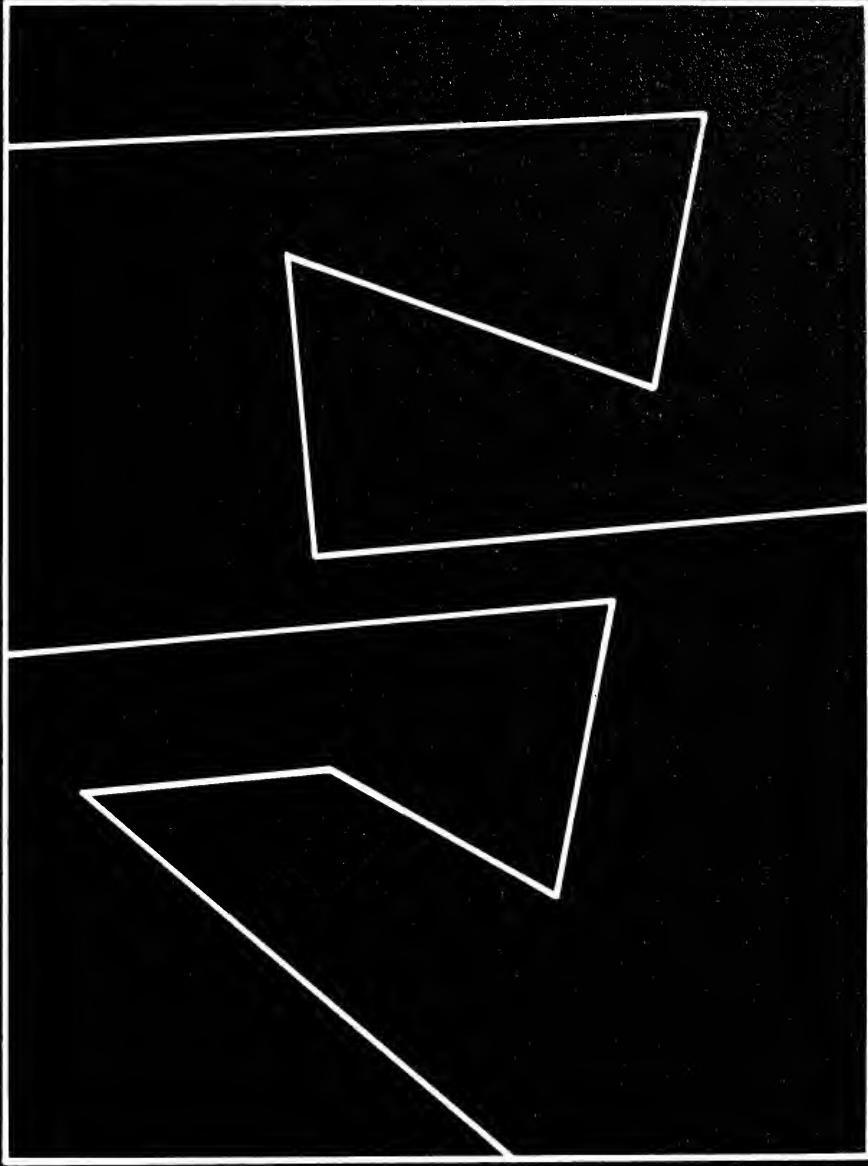


QUAD





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EDITORIAL

Although *Quad* is a small and relatively inexpensive publication, it is of major importance to creative students. Those students on our campus who are not finally satisfied with assimilation and turn to the larger task of creation need some opportunity for presenting their efforts to their fellows. *Quad* provides such an opportunity.

While *Quad* cannot claim confidently that it represents "the best" of student literature, the editors have adjudged the selections included in this issue to be of a quality meriting the critical attention of the reader.

The editors extend thanks to Raymond MacMahon and the Art Department for their cooperation in producing this issue of the magazine.

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THE FIGHT

A Short Story by Howard Cruse

The voice calling his name cut ominously through the cold tension of the classroom. Sammy heard forty pencils stop their scratching and felt eighty eyes watching him across open math books and dingy composition pads.

Mrs. Weane stood in the door. He looked at her — as the eighty eyes looked at him — and he realized that he hated her as he felt the eyes hated him.

"Come out in the hall for a minute, Sammy," she said.

He laid down his stub of a pencil as if it were an anvil: slowly, deliberately, thinking over every move as though he were solving a crucial problem in physics, dealing with a massive weight which would crush his fingers if he were the least bit careless.

Rising from his chair, he was conscious of an odd heaviness. Even though the scales only registered ninety-eight as he watched them hopefully each night, shivering naked by the bathtub and breathing deeply to capture every ounce of air possible in his lungs — now, in the hated classroom, he seemed burdened with atmosphere a thousand times denser than usual, air saturated with the suspicion and dislike of his classmates.

He knew what they were wondering. He saw the alien looks of the girls; he saw also the blazing threat in the eyes of Ralph Swanson. And he felt like shouting, "*Stop looking at me like that! I'm not going to tell. You think I'm a tattle-tale?*"

He didn't shout anything, however, but obediently followed Mrs. Weane into the hall. But he had made up his mind. He was not going to tell.

And he didn't. Yes, he had been beside the gymnasium when the rock came crashing through the window, spitting glass in every direction — a sliver of which effected a dramatic scratch on Molly Puckett's left elbow, much to Molly's and Coach Funlocke's consternation. Yes, he had heard the crash and the howl and had seen the people running to investigate. But he had been looking away beforehand — he hadn't noticed who it was that threw the rock.

He was a good liar. He hated being a good liar, because telling a lie made his stomach contract until he felt like gasping and falling to the floor, and it made the sweat pour down his brow, and he would grow dizzy, and his conscience would squeeze his vision out of focus and make his throat stop up. But these things always happened hours later, when the lie had already been told. While he was telling it, he could look Mrs. Weane right in the eye and lie with the particular kind of sincere knot on his brow which he had discovered always lent a strange credibility to his words.

"I didn't see anyone in particular," he told her very earnestly. "I really wasn't trying to notice. I'm sorry. I should have thought to look. But I just didn't."

He watched her nodding and believing every word. He was sorry to lie to Mrs. Weane, because she trusted him, and his conscience, he knew, would hurt twice as badly for his having lied to *her* than it would with someone else. She was a very large, motherly widow, with unbounded idealism and unlimited capacity for love. Her students were her lambs and she, their devoted, good-natured, evangelical, big-breasted shepherdess who would beat away the fiercest wolves with her bare hands.

He hated himself for lying to her. Yet at night he would sometimes lie awake and wonder why, at strange, unpredictable times (such as when she had called his name a few minutes before and he had looked up at her standing there in the door waiting for him to bound to her call), he would realize that he hated her. For just an instant he would hate her. But then, while they were standing in the hall and

she was telling him how she wished he had seen who had thrown the rock but she knew that he wouldn't lie to her, and while he watched her huge body — that one great sack of mother-love — shaking and bouncing with trust, he would wonder how he could ever do anything but love her.

He knew who had broken the window. He watched Ralph Swanson pick up the rock and had heard Peter James taunting, "You wouldn't do it! You wouldn't dare!" He had watched Ralph take careful aim, getting ready to run when he threw. He had seen the window smash and had heard the screams. But he knew he wouldn't tell. He had known that even before he felt the eighty eyes staring at him, hating him.

He had told once before. Years before. And he knew what happens when someone tells. Nobody ever forgets.

He went back into the classroom and sat down, and he looked Ralph in the eye and said with his own eyes, "*You see! I didn't tell. I'm no tattle-tale.*"

But somebody was. Ten minutes later, Ralph Swanson was called to the principal's office. Someone had told. Some bright-eyed, neatly-combed, behind-the-scenes someone had knotted a brow earnestly and told the truth.

But it hadn't been *him*. No, Sammy Dobbs was no tattle-tale.

Yet from the moment that the swaggering Ralph Swanson paused a calculated moment to grace Sammy with a fiery look, Sammy knew that suddenly it no longer mattered what he had said to Mrs. Weane out there in the hall. It was suddenly absurdly irrelevant that he had knotted his brow earnestly and lied. Every boy and girl in that sixth-grade class had intercepted and interpreted that glance. Every one of them knew he had tattled. Now the eighty eyes no longer hid their stares, nor their hatred. Sammy's throat swelled with unspoken self-defenses; his eyes grew watery and fogged with despair. He could not stand to look at his workbook, yet everywhere else he looked, he could not avoid the eyes.

He wished that somehow he could find out who had told and make him admit it. In his mind he saw himself wild with fury, plunging onto the tattler, choking him, beating his head against concrete, crushing his chest with his knee, smashing his head until it screamed out bloody confessions. Sammy's heart began to race madly as he constructed and re-constructed this scene of vengeance, in which he was always the victor that he never was except in dreams. His head swam with a kind of delirious longing that just this time it might be true, and that everyone would know who had tattled and that Sammy had only knotted his brow and lied. Everyone *had* to know. They *had* to.

But all along he knew that the scene of justice would never come to pass. He would stand forever on the bathroom scales, and the pointer would forever point to ninety-eight, and his mother would forever say, "You'll get big soon enough. And with your talents, you'll go a lot further than any of those others will."

No one spoke to him when the final bell rang and everyone piled out of the classroom. He was alone as he walked down the hall, separate somehow from the crowds pushing him from all sides as they shoved their way to the battered school buses. He was separate — except for one brief moment when Peter James appeared from somewhere to mutter, "Go to hell!" before re-vanishing. And then the crowds pushed on, and then Sammy was walking silently home.

He had never ridden in one of the yellow buses. He had always lived not far from the school — it would have been a distance of about ten blocks, had the town been large enough to have to worry about what blocks were. For part of the way home, there was only a dirt path beside the highway; then there was a sidewalk through the three or four blocks called "downtown". Sammy's home was just on the

other side. Each day he walked the same way, thinking many of the same thoughts, dropping into the same places to buy the same after-school snacks.

The old post office was always waiting patiently for him as he came out of the drug store with a candy bar in his pocket and a new comic book tucked away between his books. The post office was usually a rather lonely place, except for occasional gossips who stood in the corner and exchanged vivid stories in whispers while ignoring the "No Loitering" sign. Today being Thursday, the old General Delivery and Stamp Window was not even open, and the back room was vacant. Sammy could pick up the mail that had been placed in his box that morning, but if he had found one of the little grey cards which say, "GO TO WINDOW FOR PACKAGE," he would have been forced to wait a day to find out what wonderful thing had come for him in the mails. Only he never got those cards, and he never received any packages, and he almost never got any mail except around Valentine's Day when the valentines would come, and even then there were never very many of them.

It happened after he had put down his load of books, as he was bending over to get the mail out of his box. He got a chill. He got it when the door opened and closed behind him. He didn't know why he got it, just hearing a door close. Maybe it was the pause and the heavy silence that alerted him. Perhaps it was the footsteps — two sets of footsteps — footsteps he maybe recognized from having heard them before.

He looked around, and his eye saw Ralph Swanson and Peter James.

His mind began to whirl in panic, but even as it whirled, a cold fact shot downward to grind into his pounding heart; the town was not a busy town; the post office was not a busy place — especially on Thursdays when most wives drove down in the morning to pick up the mail. No one was to be seen through the large window, and even if someone were to look from across the street, they couldn't see what was going on in the old, shadowy building. Again Sammy was separate, but his separate world was invaded, and there was no other, more defensible world into which he could draw for escape. And the invaders stood solidly between him and the outside world of escape.

Sammy's consciousness first played over these realities in a satisfyingly abstract way. Then the fear hit: it was swelling, squeezing, twisting him inside. He tried to swallow the gagging force which was hysterically filling his throat.

He *had* to escape. He could never fight Ralph, who was a large, strong boy, a fierce fighter, two years too old for the sixth grade. And behind Ralph was Peter. The sweat on his palms felt warm and damp as a despairing throb in Sammy's head pounded with a question: *Where had it gone — that blinding courage that always seized him in his dreams and made him leap upon his opponent and beat his head against concrete?* The blinding courage seized him no longer.

Ralph was there. He stood between Sammy and the door, and Ralph *knew* that he stood between Sammy and the door, and the corner of his mouth grinned.

The first shock of fear left numbness, and Sammy had a vague inspiration that, if somehow he concentrated upon separating himself from the invaders by ignoring them, they would perhaps part, in awe of his unconcern. He gathered up his books neatly and turned to the pair, regarding them coldly and, he hoped, unconcernedly. But as he walked toward the door, he knew that his bluff was absurdly ineffective. With a profoundly inexpressive face, Sammy let himself collide clumsily with Ralph as though the latter were a transparent obstruction. Peter drew himself up.

"Watch it, Dobbs!" Ralph said.

Sammy's blood began racing again through his veins, and his heart took up a relentless, savage throb.

"Excuse me," he said in a toneless voice, and tried again to push through.

"Quit shoving, Dobbs!"

"Yeah, quit shoving!" echoed Peter.

"Then how about getting out of the way," Sammy said coldly, his voice not quite as awe-inspiringly unconcerned as he has planned. He tried once more to push by, with a hesitatingly aggressive movement of the arm which accidentally sent one of Ralph's notebooks clattering to the floor. Ralph reddened.

"Pick up my damn notebook!" he demanded.

"Pick it up yourself!" Sammy snapped.

And it was happening. Incredibly, it was happening. That something deep within him was happening — that something that *had* to happen and yet that had seemed forever in coming.

It was a stirring. It was a stinging, surging force. It was a fearsome, piercing call (a wolf, high on a moonlit mountain, perhaps — heard only before in restless dreams, but heard now; Heard now; felt now; and now answered—)

"Pick it up your own damn self!" said Sammy.

A strange, exotic elation was building up within him, for he knew that it was the wolf's call — the call for which he had longed — that was ringing in his ear. *Or was it a wolf? Perhaps what he heard, and what he felt, was too momentous to be characterized by a metaphorical word — perhaps it was . . .*

"What is this?" demanded Ralph.

. . . a universe of meaning so great that the call of the wolf was only an echo of a greater call that had been crying to him in vain for years, something — perhaps manhood — calling him . . .

His hands, which had never tensed like this, tensed so now. And he stood before Ralph, and his shoulders squared.

But Ralph saw nothing but the Sammy Dobbs that had been before, so he drew his own hands into confident fists. "Are you looking for trouble?"

Sammy said nothing. He knew what he was going to do. While he slowly stooped and laid his books on the floor beside Ralph's fallen notebook, he kept his eyes fixed on the invaders, counting in his mind, *one . . . two . . . three . . .*

Then, with one sudden motion, he stood and laid his hands firmly on Ralph's shoulders. As Ralph's eyes flickered with a question, and then with fury, Sammy exerted every bit of power his lean muscles would produce to catch the boy off-balance, swing him in a swift circle, and fling him to the floor. Ralph landed with a thud, an astonished expression on his face. Peter James only stared. Sammy saw that there was no one between him and the door. His heart pounding, he picked up his books and walked to the door, shock and elation at his unexpected victory building to a peak as he approached the outside freedom.

But suddenly there was blackness as a silhouette blocked his way. A large figure stood in the doorway, casually searching a bulky purse for keys to open a post office box. Her eyes, intently scanning

the purse, flashed upward for an instant at the petrified face of Sammy Dobbs.

There was only silence in the building as Mrs. Weane shut the door.

"Hello, Sammy," she said. Finding her key, she glanced upward again, first becoming aware of Sammy's expression of despair, then glancing with disapproval at Peter and at Ralph, who was rising to his feet in silent fury. The faces of the latter two brought an irritated twitch to her mouth — here were two restless black lambs whom she could not draw into her fold. Her gaze returned to Sammy, and she tried to comprehend the meaning within his eyes. Her interpretive powers failing, she uneasily swung her body toward the rows of mailboxes and concerned herself with extracting from her box the day's run of bills and advertisements.

But those seconds of delay had cost Sammy his advantage. Ralph was now standing, his face red with anger — Ralph, who had often defied Mrs. Weane and who, Sammy knew, would not hesitate to resume the fight in her presence. Sammy's heart sank as he regarded Mrs. Weane — now so innocently occupied with her mail. How he hated her, for that dismal moment!

And he listened desperately for the call of the wolf. In the long, deep night of his mind, he listened and listened.

The seething Ralph stepped up to him. "Put down those books," Ralph commanded, his fists opening and closing with anticipation.

. . . *Listening. Listening so hard that tears were lining his eyes. Listening for a wolf. Hearing only the echoes of silence.*

So real. It had seemed so real.

"Put down those books or I'll knock 'em down," Ralph was warning.

Mrs. Weane turned sharply from her mail. She watched as Sammy laid down the books and stood up to face Ralph.

The blow came. It was a hard blow, smashing against his jaw, jarring him in a shuddering vibration unlike any he had ever experienced before.

And he heard it again — whistling, roaring against his brain, intoxicating him. The wolf — a thousand wolves, on the ledge of a mountain torrent which was suddenly within the very room, lifting him up in the fury of a thundering current . . .

And he knew that he could fight — that he must fight. Boiling blood rushed to his temple, and searing-hot wires drew his fingers violently into a fist which ached for brutal contact. And he drew the fist —

But he was impotent. Something was wrong. Something in the scheme of things had gone awry. For a moment he could not comprehend what was happening. Then he saw.

Mrs. Weane had stepped forward and slapped Ralph Swanson. Hardly had the snapping peal of flesh striking flesh died away when she struck again, and again. Ralph shrank back under the fierce, retaliatory attack of the woman.

And Sammy felt as though he had somehow fallen into a bottomless pit. All was silent, except for the empty rush of wind. His head swimming with a new kind of hollowness, Sammy lifted his books with trembling hands and, without looking at Mrs. Weane, his eternal protectress, or at the defeated

Ralph, he stepped from the post office into the cold freedom outside, and walked away into a shadowy night which may have been afternoon but, to him, was black night all the same.

He did not realize that he was crying convulsively until he reached home and his mother said, "Sammy, what in the world is the matter?"

Then he felt the wet tears streaming down his face, and he went into his bedroom and fell down upon the bed.

He was a shell. There was no more wolf. There was nothing but a haunting echo of a call which he had once heard, but would hear no more.

He lay there for hours. His mother only disturbed him once, after the phone rang, to tell him, "Mrs. Weane is calling, Sammy."

Then he knew – he knew how deep, how ferocious, how eternal was his hatred for Mrs. Weane. He did not know why, but he hated her and damned her and wished she would die and burn forever!

But all he said was, "I don't want to talk to her."

That was all. He lay on the bed, his eyes dry and crusty, until his father came home. Then he told them everything, and he cried, and his mother stroked his head and promised him wonderful things when he was grown up and a success.

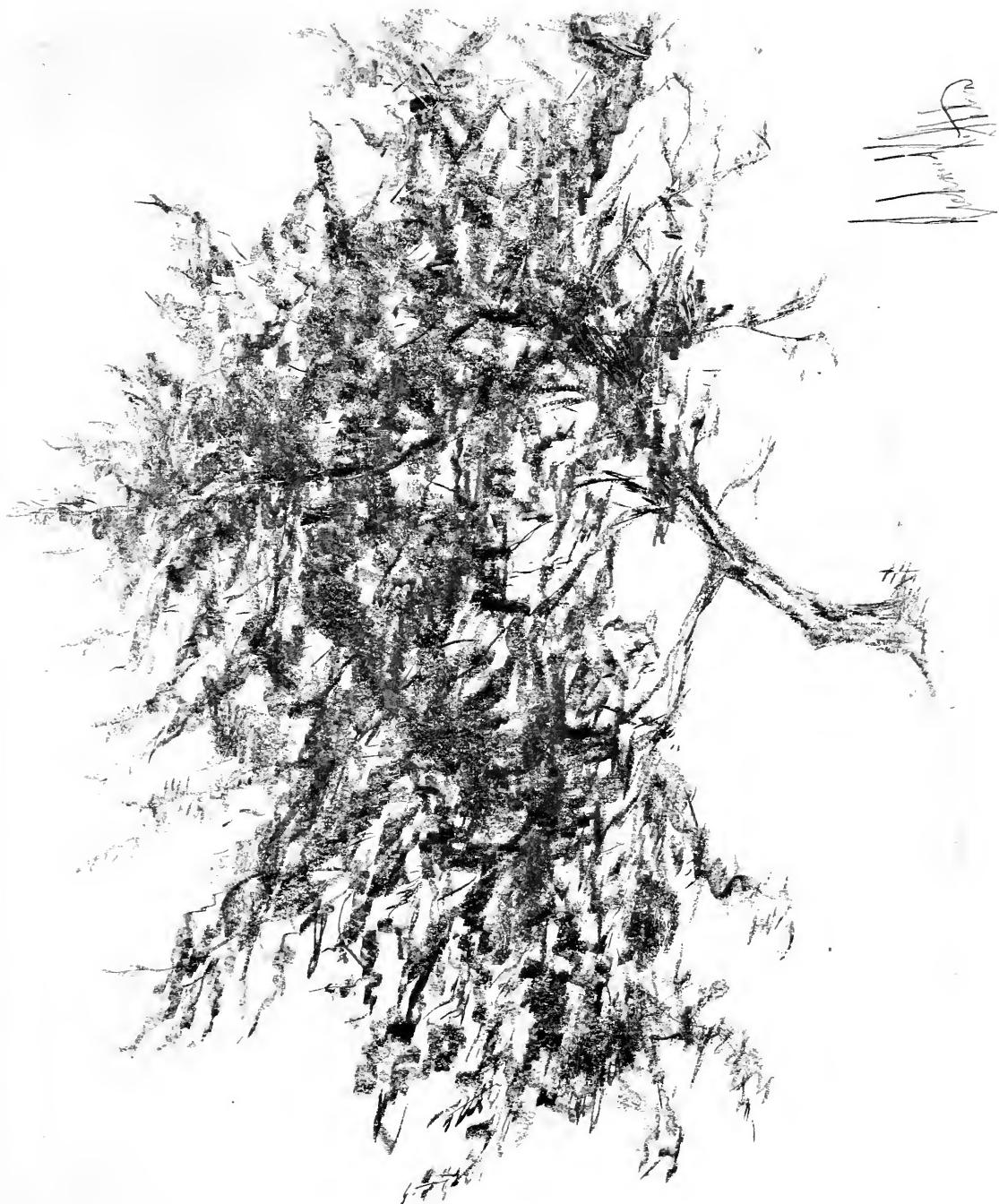
Later that night, Mrs. Weane stopped in to see how he was feeling. She retold the whole story from her point of view, her big body bouncing as she gestured, her eyes full of compassion for Sammy. And as he felt the love radiating from her soul, he knew that he did not hate her. How could he ever have hated her?

"There are some people who won't respond to kindness at all," Mrs. Weane said, speaking of Ralph. "Some people will be bullies all their lives."

Then she put her large, heavy arms around Sammy and said, "But one thing is certain – Sammy's got qualities that none of them will ever have."

She drew him to her, and suddenly he was sobbing again and burying his face in her soft, warm bosom, and he knew why he loved her, and his heart thanked her in a hundred different ways all at once.





DE PROFUNDIS

Robert L. Stansel

Great Neptune surges up and raises one clenched fist!
Down dark-weaved webs that streak his massive scaly back
His minions flash and tumble toward the dawn-flecked mist.
King Neptune only laughs and splashes foaming black.
The ever distant cry of Triton's emerald horn
Floats out across the fields of spectral verdure, calling:
Do battle with the cloud-coiffed myrmidons of morn!
Abyssal legions, beryl-faced, in answer from their lord come falling.
A great dim horrible orb is rising from where all tints are born;
The sea-god stirs his murky vortices and grins out
With a dark glory of gilded verdigris that stains the amber vest of morn.
From out the deeps is borne a livid shout:
He knows his looming adversary has not won!
His spectral chords shall seize and use the sun!

"CHILD, CHILD, THERE IS NO DARKNESS"

Robert L. Stansel

Child, child, there is no darkness
Deeper than the night that lurks behind your eyes.
But how narrow the skull,
How clear the film of fire that floats across our sea.
This, and this only, is something of meaning to me,
For though the rights of love may make my heathen heart full,
These same do cause the apse, aortic walls to seize,
And bring upon a flood of hopelessness.
See, see, the aging act that drains
The massive throbbing heart and pains
The necklace of lily's that lies
Just beneath the ruby flowers of night.
The proud flesh reels; and, stumbling
Towards the light, the grumbling
Beast that, teetering, sets itself aright,
And, proceeding to its destination, dies:
It purposed to avail itself of joy in the main;
Now, its failures faulted, intentions mangled
The creature of dawn's twilight lies slain.

WHAT SORT OF TRAGEDY IS OTHELLO?

Sena Jeter

This paper on "What Sort of Tragedy is *Othello*?" rests basically on A. C. Bradley's thoughts on the substance of Shakespearean tragedy. According to my understanding of Bradley, he says that Shakespearean tragedy consists of (1) an exceptional calamity (2) to a man of high estate; (3) the calamity arises from the action of men (4) which is an expression of character. (5) The character of the protagonist is such that it contains a tragic flaw which leads to his downfall, (6) but the flaw also accounts for his greatness. And there seems to be a seventh attribute of tragedy which does not lie directly in the make-up of the play, but in the effect of the whole: in viewing the tragic flaw the audience feels pity and terror, and in viewing the greatness is conscious of the possibilities of human nature, of the great waste involved in life, and of the mystery in the ordering of a world which contains both great potential and great waste. Bradley has set forth these characteristics feeling, I believe, that they are more or less applicable to all of Shakespeare's tragedies. Of course, however, they do not constitute an adequate theoretical description of any of the plays if they are taken individually. While it was Bradley's purpose to abstract a theory which would be general enough to apply generally, it is the purpose of this paper to examine what happens in *Othello* and to abstract from this view of the action a theoretical framework for this particular play.

E. M. W. Tillyard has suggested three possible frameworks which, I think, assume Bradley's notions as a foundation. Tillyard says that a tragedy may be of the sort (1) in which "the suffering becomes tragic when it befalls a strong nature who is not merely passive but reacts against calamity" or (2) in which "the tragic feeling is related to a kind of sacrificial purgation" or (3) in which "the tragic feeling is related to the renewal consequent upon destruction." At the end of this article I shall return to Tillyard's ideas, but in the beginning I shall fasten my attention upon the play, upon "what happens" rather than on Tillyard's conceptions.

If a viewer were asked "What happens in *Othello*?" the answer would probably be something like this: "Othello believes that his wife is unfaithful to him, so he kills her; and then when he finds out that she had not been unfaithful, he kills himself." This simple description of the main action of the play directly suggests that on the abstract level the play is concerned with guilt and punishment, and I think in so far as it goes, we can depend on the main action to lead us into a helpful understanding of the play. Yet, to say that the play is about guilt and punishment is to tell us little about the nature of the *tragedy*.

In trying to extract from a viewer a notion of the action that leads to the tragic nature of the play and its abstract framework, the next question would probably be, "Why does Othello think his wife is unfaithful?" The simple (and inadequate) answer is "Iago tells him so." And then one must ask, "What sort of person is Iago that he would lie and what sort of person is Desdemona that she could be lied about or would not expose the lie?" And to these questions there are no simple answers that will suffice. The question of what sort of tragedy do we have has turned into a question of what sort of people do we have.

As Bradley says happens in all tragedies, when we begin to examine action, we find character.

In the opening lines of *Othello*, Iago tells Roderigo that he hates Othello; furthermore, he says that the cause of his hatred is that Othello has appointed Cassio as his lieutenant — a post Iago wants and believes that he ought to have. In short, Iago has judged Othello's act and found him offensive: the rest of the play hinges, in a way, on Iago's punishment of Othello. After he tells Roderigo of his hatred, Iago says,

...Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affirmed
To love the Moor.

Iago is fully aware of his position as a self-appointed judge, and Roderigo, too, accepts himself as a judging creature. But Roderigo says,

I would not follow him then.

Iago, on the other hand, construes execution as an essential part of his role as judge. Although Iago is, of course, capable of lying to Roderigo, I suppose he is describing himself truthfully when he says that he will willfully appear to have any quality which helps him gain his own "peculiar end." The first discomfort that Iago plans for Othello is to have him disturbed on his wedding night. Fittingly enough, Iago, who did not get what he wanted, wants to upset Othello's possession of the one he has set his heart upon. As the play progresses, Iago stays on the same track — his supreme revenge being that he manages to make Othello separate himself from what he loves most. Othello believes that:

My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly.

Nevertheless, he has offended not only Iago but also Brabantio. He has secretly carried off and married Brabantio's daughter. While Shakespeare never shows us if Othello was justified in preferring Cassio to Iago or in taking Desdemona in this manner, he does show that Brabantio, instead of becoming judge-executor himself, sends the case to the duke. While Iago asserts himself and executes his judgements to please himself, Brabantio restrains himself and refuses the part of judge-executor. Of course, it is love of his daughter that keeps him from this role. In the fifth act Shakespeare bothers to let us know that the grief of being separated from his daughter has proved "mortal" to Brabantio. This is painful knowledge in itself, but it serves a further dramatic purpose of emphasizing the pathos in Othello's position. Othello has become the judge-executor like Iago — but he carries with his role the love of Brabantio.

This capacity in Othello's character has already manifested itself. Before Iago convinces Othello of the faithlessness of Desdemona, he makes it appear that Cassio has not "been what he seems," that he is too irresponsible for the post of lieutenant. That Cassio is really guilty of weakness is less important for the audience to note than that Othello, though he loves him, feels it is his duty to judge Cassio and to remove him.

...Give me to know
How this foul rout began, who set it on;
And he that is approved in this offense,

Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
Shall lose me.

Cassio, I love thee;
But never more be officer of mine.

In this instance few people would blame Othello. After all, he is a great general partly because of his ability to make decisions. Montano says in praise of him:

...the man commands
like a full soldier.

But Othello is also a man of great passion, which will not always be commanded. When he loses his self-command, but marches resolutely to kill Desdemona because of his wounded, maddened honor we pity and fear him, but we have little respect for him.

...Look here, Iago;
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
'Tis gone.
Arise, black vengeance, from thy hollow cell!
O, blood, blood, blood!

When he strikes Desdemona, we loathe him.

But in the fifth act, he approaches Desdemona not with anger, but with sorrow. He forces himself to act as though he were a disinterested judge. In his own view and in ours, he becomes almost like God who "chastens whom he loves";

This sorrow's heavenly,
It strikes where it doth love.

As much as we may want to shout, "Get some omniscience with the omnipotence you mete yourself," the scene stifles us with awe. Here in *Othello* we see at work tremendous loyalty to an idea, but we see how much is being wasted. Here, the tragic feeling is closely related to a sense of sacrificial purgation: man is seen to have the capacity to make tremendous decisions for maintaining his value system, but at great cost to himself.

While it is not the purpose of this paper to examine thoroughly the value systems that stand behind the variety of "judges" in *Othello*, it is a part of the waste which pervades *Othello* that Iago has the same courage in this respect that Othello has.

When Othello kills himself, he does it because he has been shown that his earlier "sacrifice" of Desdemona was indeed a murder. As Mark Van Doren says, "having punished the innocent, it only remains for him to punish the guilty." This sacrifice, unlike the first one, is based on horrible fact.

It seems to me that the dramatic high points of *Othello* lead us to consider it a play in which the "tragic feeling is related to a kind of sacrificial purgation." Othello suffers, but not through direct action against the occurrence of the calamity. He is too simple-minded to know what to resist. Certainly, *Othello* does not have the feeling of the renewal consequent upon destruction that *Hamlet* has. The rottenness is of a limited sort: here it exists only as a cancer caused by Iago in the brain of Othello the judge,

with the judge ordering his own execution. The fact that Shakespeare has Othello kill himself rather than be killed carries with it the atmosphere of sacrifice. And, Desdemona and Othello have the same death bed. It is difficult to see a private renewal in Othello; he simply learns that he has been mistaken, and that the mistake calls for a certain purification on his part. To one who knew Othello well, suicide was the convulsion of nature expected of him.

This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon,
For he was great of heart.

And it was this greatness of heart that overcame for a while the head of one who loved
not wisely, but too well.

THE BURIAL

Edward Entrekin

"He has mounted the steps . . ."
Suffocating odors swallow me and rush
Tighter downward closer.
(A trip spring released in absence sans effort)
Still present yet without,
Soar I alone lost in strangling darkness
Out from the cave of chains.
Pressures pushing pull me from my perch;
Alone have I gone a way.
Purity of Light prevails; unseen stand I
Encircled and lost.
Purging perdition results in catharsis
Of psyche, destruction of body.
Absorbed in light, yet covered in darkness;
With Night is come my sight.

GIGUE

Lee Fesperman

Straight and erect, the marble thrusts upward
Out of the viscous blackness and is matched
By the crystalline needle through tar broached,
And night is broken by the bright day orb.
Sun, glorying in the chromatic haard
Of an oil slick, the blistering heat, blanched
Sidewalks, the flowing strength of time-life hatched
Beneath the shining damoclean sward.

Force up again against the flow of time,
The great brass clock with hands reaching far space,
The soft rubber ball bouncing and bauncing,
And fall before the bright sky's glowing face
The great brass clock with hands reaching far space,
The soft rubber ball bouncing and bauncing.



PALOS BALLAD

Elizabeth F. Sulzby

Nathan Jones, convict camp guard, set out one day
From Palos camp to Bessie Mine,
Through the Bonner woods over the trestle,
Our railroad bridge of steel and pine.

"River's up. Can scarcely see the island,"
The island being a patch of trees
Big enough to hide a man sobering up
Or bringing a bitch to her knees.

Don't cross that trestle, Nathan heard
A voice. "A sure, clear sign for me,"
He thought, "I've been warned." And he tied
Miss Bess to a hicker-nut tree.

"Next thing I'll be hearing Nigger
Blue out plowing the ghost graveyard."
(Blue had plowed under his block ancestors
And still he plows, his mule untired.)

We found Bess's bones beneath that same tree.
Nate's were under the trestle's shade
About three feet above highwater mark,
Beneath no mound that shovel made.

The folks at the Palos depot had told
Our Nathan boy that people ought
To take care: with two trains running a track
You can't tell when you might get caught.

Nate said Bess would not shy from gun nor train.
And I'll tell you: there'd never be
A horse like Old Bess starved herself to death
Because she was tied to a hicker-nut tree.

THE DEAD CENTER OF NOWHERE

Janice Entrekin

Climbing on a level plain
Little creatures running inward
Towards an ever sunny day.

Concentric circles on a plane
Mark the creatures' involution
Patterned like a housedress.

SETH

Charles Gaines III

I

I know pride from need
And strength and servility to law.
I should not be ashamed of death.
He sat on the porch
And spoke out loud when he saw
The ice crack wider
In the pond below.
Tattered quilts of snow
All around the shack were
Striped with branch dark melt.
The orange sun was high
And soft in the brittle sky.
His fields would begin to thaw soon
And allow the entrance of seed.
Lavinia, he felt, would like the way this spring
Has opened slowly like a crocus blooming.

II

Lavinia had not been ashamed of death
She had slipped so quietly into it
It might have been an oily glove.
Lying gently on the iron cot fifteen years ago
She had left him like the exhalation of a dark, frosty breath.
In whispers she had taught him bit by bit
That week that dying could be done with love
And pride. "Don't you hurry Seth," she said, "Let it settle slow."
Things had not done as well since she
Had left him to his own.
Five years with little crop and three
With none at all, and he had been alone
Until he broke his leg and could not work the land.
That hurt the most. But it would settle soon
And let the fear and loneliness be washed away like sand.
The old man squinted up at the golden afternoon.

III

Dying, he thought, is never gentle to the face
Eyes are dumb and shocked as if the time
Was wrong or everything was out of place.
The mouth is as clumsy and soft as a cloud
And fear dries up the skin and flakes it off like lime.
Not many do it proud.
Even the land gives up when it settles in fall for awhile.
It heaves, rustling as it dies, and moans like a child.
I have only known that summer beaver
To pass as Lavinia did, with grace.
He knew I hunted him but he would not leave the pond.
He was proud there, or maybe old.

Seth tired now and dizzy with waiting
Through the gone winter that broke his leg.
He would have been ashamed then, lying wet
When the horse rolled, upset the wagon
On them both and night coming
With cold hurt, clean bone through the skin,
And diamond needles in his skull. The horse sound'
Like human coughing as he beat his head in
With a fisted rock and slit the belly
With a knife to get his twisted leg inside.
Tired this way, and easy feeling, Turner found him
Huddled up around the dark spilling jelly.

It would not have gone well there in the snow
With ragged edges and no strength.
He was proud here.
She understood how it should settle slow,
How it settles soft as mist.

IV

The orange sun was low.
And the quilted snow threw shadows high
On the shack. The rising wind tore patches in the sky
And the ice cracked wider in the pond below.

AN ORIGINAL ONE-ACT PLAY

Martha Ann Bruce

Scene: A large room filled with mirrors, of every size and description. Table mirrors on tables, wall mirrors on all walls, full length mirrors and hand mirrors. There are small tables with various small objects, small stools before the tables.

Enter MAID, with Windex spray and cloth. MAID begins cleaning mirrors, starting in center, moving in circles. She turns on a radio, which begins to play dance music. She drapes the cleaning cloth over her head and looks at herself in the nearest mirror. She pirouettes several times, trailing the cloth. She finally sits in front of the three-way mirror and looks at herself quite seriously, appraisingly.

MAID: You are pretty. Nose too long, ears too big, but you look honest. And those eyes. Always the best feature, the eyes. (Puts cloth over her head again.) What a lovely madonna you'd make. (Bows her head, cradles bottle in her arms. Looks at herself further.) Yes, Father, I am fourteen years old and I am pure and I will love your son.

Each time she speaks, she looks at her own eyes in the mirror. The music is still playing softly. Suddenly she sees an imaginary blemish by her nose. She leans forward and touches it, then examines her eyebrows closely. She smiles broadly, showing her teeth, inspects her teeth, experiments with the visual effects of tossing her hair. Lifts her head imperiously, extends a hand as far as her arm-length permits.

Of course, Count Vichysoisse, you may kiss my hand. (Withdraws her hand indignantly.) Please, Count! Only the hand.

Enter MAN and WOMAN. They stand unnoticed by the MAID. They watch her for some moments as she turns in front of the mirror.

MAID: I'm sorry, Archie, but how could we have any life together? You are a professor and I am a well-known and wealthy actress. I owe things to my public that you can't begin to understand. You know that. We just couldn't marry. You know that.

MAN: What is this? (Chuckles, nudges WOMAN)

MAID whirrs to face them, embarrassed. She tries to recall exactly what she has just said. She stands tensely.

WOMAN: Can you call the proprietor to speak with us, please? We are interested in looking at some large hall mirrors.

MAID: Yes, ma'am. Certainly. I'll be just a moment.

Exit MAID, quickly, leaving cloth and Windex. WOMAN and MAN separate, looking at mirrors on each side of the room. MAN picks up cloth, wipes it across several of the mirrors.

MAN: Do I look like a window cleaner? Or a mirror washer? This is fun.

WOMAN does not notice him. She is looking at herself in a mirror on the other side of the room. He watches her for a moment, then turns to another mirror, trying on several expressions probably uncommon to him. They are opposite each other, backs to each other, each facing a large mirror. They look intently at themselves but do not speak. Each examines his own face in the mirror, touches his face, stands with hands on hips, turns around. They face each other. The music is still playing.

MAN: Dance with me, my dear? It's not "our song" but it'll do. (He starts to hum with the music and tries a few awkward steps toward her.)

WOMAN: Honestly! We're acting like fools! (She giggles)

They dance in a wide arc through the room, toward and away from the standing mirrors. As they approach the mirrors there seem to be more couples in the room. The music gets louder as they dance. Suddenly the level of the music drops to its former softness as the MANAGER enters. They pretend to be examining a mirror, hoping he hasn't seen them dancing.

MANAGER: (He has noticed, but pretends he hasn't) May I show you something? You were, I believe, in-

tered in a hall mirror? We have several styles, in many periods and to complement any interior design. Mirrors, you know, are the universal decorative items. Always correct, always beautiful, always in perfect taste.

MANAGER walks efficiently toward one of the large wall mirrors, picks up the dusting cloth, wipes an imaginary smudge from the corner.

MANAGER: This is a perfect number in the modern tradition. Perhaps if you'd tell me just what you had in mind?

WOMAN: (*She follows him, touches the mirror, leaves a finger-print*) Oh, I'm terribly sorry! (*Nervously takes the cloth and wipes away the spot*) They are all so beautiful. It must be fascinating to stay in a place like this.

MAN: What we actually wanted was a mirror for the end of the hallway. You know, to check the angle of the hat before leaving.

WOMAN: Or the hem length. Or the seams straight. Or the hat before leaving.

MAN: So probably we want something approximately seven feet three inches tall and three feet four inches wide. Plain. Not Early American or Louis XIV or Provincial. Just plain. With beveled edges.

MANAGER: That mirror will have to be cut to order, but it can be arranged. If you'll leave your telephone number and address I'll get in touch with you when I talk to the cutter. Of course, before we go ahead, we'll need some sort of contract.

MAN: Yes, of course. When you get a price, just call and I'll come back to sign. (*Presents card*) You may bill me here. Thank you. This is really an interesting place.

WOMAN: Fascinating. Simply fascinating.

MAN and WOMAN exit, after looking at themselves in each mirror they pass. MAN pretends to straighten his tie, WOMAN pats her hair, but they are looking at their faces and smile ridiculously at themselves.

MANAGER goes to radio and after turning it the wrong way so that it blares forth, he does a take and turns it off. He looks around the room, sees only himself in reflection, and takes a pipe out of his pocket. He examines the pipe, puts it in his mouth, and gives himself a sidewise glance in the

mirror in front. He laughs aloud. He takes out a handkerchief and wipes his forehead, all the time watching himself. Then he wipes a spot from his nose on the face of the mirror. He laughs again.

Enter MAID, with feather duster. She starts dusting bric-a-brac, then touches her image on the nose. She laughs.

MANAGER sees her, exits.

MAID turns on radio, resumes dusting. She sees Windex, stops dusting and starts cleaning mirrors again, this time the big ones. As she approaches a mirror, she looks at herself.

MAID: (*Sadly*) Oh, you poor little thing. And all alone in the world, too. You have to support yourself and your invalid mother and an infant sister and you live all alone. They would starve without you. (*Noble expression*) And you have such possibilities. But you don't resent your loved ones at all. You should be a grand lady, but your noble nature makes you considerate of the less fortunate in the world. When you are rich you will always give something to the poor.

She goes to another mirror.

Oh, sweetheart, I would love to live with you forever and become your partner in managing the Glass House and be your partner for life and be your wife. You are the most handsome and most considerate man in the world and I love you dearly (*Small choking sound, husky voice*) Yes, my darling. (*She hears something and quickly gets busy with the cloth.*)

Enter MANAGER, with clipboard which he is studying. He glances at her in passing. She avoids his eyes.

MANAGER: Abba, I think it would be nice if you would get some flowers for this room. There is a woman at the street corner now, I believe.

MAID: Yes sir, anything you say, sir. How about chrysanthemums?

MANAGER: Roses would be better, if they're not too expensive.

MAID: Yes sir. Roses are lovely.

Exit MAID, still carrying cloth. MANAGER walks around the room, studying his posture and watching himself walk. MAID re-enters, flustered, puts down cloth and quickly leaves again. MANAGER

pretends not to notice. He abstractly picks up the cloth and flips it around a few times until he hits a mirror. Shaken, he stops. Walks close to a mirror, sits on a stool. Laughs to himself.

Enter WOMAN, alone. MANAGER stands stiffly.

WOMAN: I just want to look around some more while my husband isn't here. There are so many fascinating things in this place.

MANAGER: Yes, of course. Make yourself right at home. Is there something that you would like particularly to see?

WOMAN: No, not at all. If you're busy, I can just look around by myself.

MANAGER: Oh, no, I don't have anything important to do.

WOMAN: Well, don't let me...you know...keep you from anything. I won't hurt anything at all.

MANAGER starts dusting, can't think of anything else to say. He moves around for a while, turns off the radio, paces. WOMAN keeps looking at him, glancing at herself when he's not looking at her.

MANAGER: Well, there is a little paper-work I need to do. I'll just leave you here and you call me if you want anything. I'll be in the next room. Make yourself at home. Make yourself at home.

WOMAN: Thank you so much. I'll be careful, I promise. And I'll just wait for him here.

Exit MANAGER. WOMAN sits in front of three-way mirror, turns to see herself from all angles. Pats her hip. Smooths her hair.

WOMAN: Big bottom you've got there, old girl. Soft and strong. Soft and flabby. (*Laughs to herself*) Time was when it was all firm flesh, no girdles in those days, huh. You were a real woman then.

She moves closer to the mirror, looks closely at her face.

Those are amazing eyes, there, young woman. You have an interesting face and your eyes show such strength of character.

Slight pause.

Oh, a screen test for me? But I've never acted before in my life. But you think I'd be photogenic? How can

you tell? The eyes are clear. Well go ahead if you really think so. But I will never be the usual movie star type. I still have my loyalty to my husband and family.

She changes her tone to a crisp, businesslike one.

I'm sorry sir, but I can't possibly give you all the money out of the vault because I myself am not allowed in the vault. If you feel that you must, you may go ahead and shoot me, but I assure you that it will serve no purpose other than to get you promptly arrested with a worse charge than attempted robbery. So I am going to call that guard over there and ask him to help you.

She indulges in a fetching smile and studies her face. MANAGER walks in. She withdraws. Suddenly.

WOMAN: There...seems to be a spot right here. I can't tell whether it's on the front or back...

MANAGER: I'm sure it's just a smudge. Abba will clean it off when she gets back.

WOMAN: Well, I'd better go.

She leaves in a big hurry, not stopping to look at herself in any of the other mirrors. As she goes through the door she nearly bumps into MAID, bringing in the roses.

MAID: 'Scuse me, Ma'am.

WOMAN: Sorry. (*Exits*)

MAID: The old woman didn't have but just this few roses, sir. But they were real cheap. Roses are red and violets are blue and they were cheap...

MANAGER: That will do, Abba. Use one of these vases. (*Indicates a fragile-looking vase on a nearby table.*)

MAID: Yes, sir.

She pats her hair in place as she walks by, practices a flirtatious smile. Manager leaves.

MAID: (*Arranging roses*) For me...a rose. A rose from...him. (*Smiles*) Roses in my hair, roses in my hand, a Spanish dancer! (*Puts rose in her mouth*) Ouch!

Enter MAN, alone.

MAN: Did your manager arrange for our mirror yet?

MAID: I'm sure I don't know, sir.

MAN: Please find him for me.

MAID exits, finds manager, both come right out.

MAN: About that mirror I ordered...

MANAGER: Yes, sir. I haven't called the company yet. They usually don't process orders until after lunch. You know, the shorter work week.

MAN: Yes. Well, don't call them. I won't be wanting that mirror after all. I think I like this one better.

Indicates one that has drawn him.

MAN: And this one, too. I think I'll take them both.

The second mirror is another that has caught his fancy. They are standing side by side. He walks to one, lifts it, and begins to take it away.

MANAGER: I can get someone to move that for you. They'll deliver it tomorrow. Only work on Thursdays—Union rules.

MAN: No, that's fine. I can move it myself.

He takes out one of the mirrors.

MANAGER: That leaves a bare spot. It's been so long since we sold anything I was beginning to get used to it. Wonder why he bought it?

MAID: I'm sure I couldn't say, sir. He seemed to like it from the start. That mirror really attracted him. 'Scuse me, sir, but aren't the flowers nice?

MANAGER: Yes, roses always are. You did a good job with the vase, Abba.

MAID: Oh, thank you, sir.

Enter WOMAN

WOMAN: Pardon me. Was my husband here?

MANAGER: Yes, he was. He left only a few seconds ago. You should have seen him on the street — he was carrying a mirror.

WOMAN: A mirror. Oh, yes, that's why I came in here. My husband was carrying a mirror? I want to buy some mirrors.

MANAGER: But your husband just bought two mirrors.

WOMAN: That's all right. We have several rooms. I want this mirror. And this one. And this one.

Indicates three mirrors she has been interested in, on the other side of the room from where her hus-

band selected his mirrors.

MANAGER: Are you sure you need all those mirrors?

WOMAN: I want them.

MANAGER: Yes, certainly. I can have them delivered tomorrow.

WOMAN: No, I'll take them. They're not heavy.

She leaves with one of the mirrors.

MANAGER: Abba, where are those "Sold" stickers? We may be needing them.

MAID: I think I saw them last week in the 1947 catalog. We must have stuck them away.

MANAGER: See if you can't find them.

MAID: Yes, sir.

Leaves to look for stickers.

MANAGER: Five of my friends — sold. I'll miss you. (*Looks in or at the center mirror*) And where will you go, my handsome one? Where will you go without the friends to talk to and listen to? Where will you go?

MAID: (*Returning with stickers*) Here they are, sir. There may still be some stickum on the back.

MANAGER: That's fine. Now fix the ones that we sold.

MAID: Yes, sir.

She puts the stickers on the three remaining mirrors.

MANAGER: It will be lonely here without the mirrors, won't it?

MAID: Yes, sir. But sir...

MANAGER: Yes?

MAID: Can't we order some more? To fill up the room again?

MANAGER: Oh, no. That is impossible. There will never be mirrors like these we have.

Enter MAN. Looks quickly around the room. Sees "Sold" stickers.

MAN: Business must be good today.

MANAGER: But sir, your wife bought those other three mirrors. Didn't you see her on your way back? She was carrying a mirror.

MAN: Oh, carrying a mirror? I came in here for a mirror. I want to buy two mirrors.

MANAGER: You did buy two mirrors.

MAN: Two more mirrors.. I like them.

MANAGER: Yes, sir. Of course, sir. (*Shrugs*) Which two?

MAN: This one and this one.

MANAGER: A fine choice, sir.

MAID puts two more stickers on the two mirrors.

MAN: I'll just take this one and come back for the others.

Exits with mirror.

MANAGER (*Sternly*): You needn't have put a sticker on the one he was carrying.

MAID: Oh! Of course, sir. Very sorry. Will there be enough left?

MANAGER: Yes.

MANAGER exits. MAID goes to each of sold mirrors, touches them tenderly, tries to speak, cannot. She dusts them quickly and turns away. She goes to an unmarked mirror.

MAID: You'll be lonely here – without your friends. You silly one, and all these years working in this place, this lovely place. You lovely young girl.

She smooths her hair again and again. Turns on radio. Dances in front of large mirror. Enter WOMAN. WOMAN goes directly to one of her mirrors, takes it off the wall. Holds it in front of herself. She looks deeply into it. Smiles and goes away.

Enter MAN – goes to one of his mirrors. MAID turns off radio and leaves.

MAN: You handsome devil. How would you look with a mustache? (*Holds pen below his nose*) Too long. Now I ask, is that sophisticated? (*Laughs*) You could probably seduce that silly maid. You could seduce that silly maid. (*Laughs*)

MAN goes to another mirror, sits, crosses his legs.

And that was just the way the safari was, gentlemen. Only two lions worth their stuffing. (*Laughs*)

MAN starts toward another mirror. Enter the MANAGER.

MAN: Sir, you may bill me for these mirrors.

MANAGER: Of course. It's all arranged.

MAN: Thank you.

Exit MAN, with mirror. MANAGER walks to remaining mirrors, touches them one by one. MAID enters, follows him, wiping off smudges with Windex and cloth. He turns, sees her, she is flustered.

Enter WOMAN, walks to mirrors, tries to decide which one to take.

WOMAN: This one will be nice for the bathroom and this one for the bedroom. I needed a mirror for the bedroom. And one for the kitchen and one for the hallway – you know, the hat before leaving.

MANAGER: Yes. Mirrors are very useful.

WOMAN: I want these mirrors, too.

She indicates two more unmarked mirrors on the wall. MAID immediately and without a word places the sold stickers on the mirrors.

Thank you.

Enter MAN. He glances at WOMAN, then into a mirror behind her, rubs his chin, looks thoughtful. Then he looks away. He speaks, to no one in particular.

MAN: Yes, mirrors are useful – decorative, always in perfect taste.

Looks at WOMAN. They stare at one another. Each picks up a mirror. They leave together. MANAGER turns on radio, picks up clipboard, makes notes. MAID takes rose from vase.

Enter WOMAN, removes mirror, leaves. -

Enter MAN, removes mirror, leaves.

Enter WOMAN, removes mirror, leaves.

All mirrors now gone from walls.

MAID moves chair in front of remaining three-way mirror, sits, faces one panel. MANAGER looks at her, starts to speak, does not. He moves chair in front of large mirror also. He takes a rose.

Enter MAN, removes a table mirror. Leaves.

Enter WOMAN, takes two table mirrors, leaves.

Enter MAN and WOMAN, each takes a hand mirror, leaves.

MANAGER and MAID watch silently. MANAGER

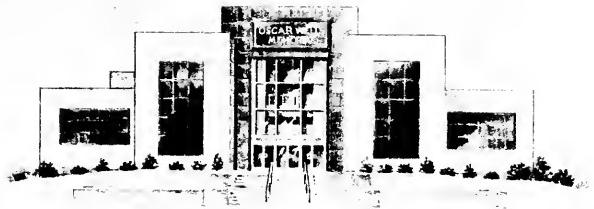
picks leaves from rose, drops them. MAID watches silently, her hands folded in her lap.

Fade lights and sound.

WAR FEVER

Jay Smith

The Roman phalanx so proudly martial.
Leather smells, clanking steel, the sound of grit
Under twenty thousand tight-wrapped sandals
That do not care what they crush. Remembered with
The rare strength and ruthlessness of the bold
Ragged men of Pizarro, destroying
A millennium of history in days.
Sensed with boot, fine black boots, and tailored
Nazi uniforms, iron crosses, and "Zieg Heil's,"
Men! Strong as steel! Men! And conscious, too!
Thoughts mixed with memories of bomb-bursts, trumpets,
And cascades of fire and drums and smoke.
There is no escape from the animal joy
Of murdering beauty and sanctity.



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